



November/December 2009
Cheshvan/Kislev/Tevet 5770

Morgantown, West Virginia

It is a Tree of Life to
those that hold fast to it.

RABBI

David Feder

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CHANUKAH PARTY



Sunday, December 13
5:00 pm

Prepare your taste buds and spirits for the best latkes this side of the Vishtula. The auction of goods and services to benefit the Religious School will also take place that evening. Please donate your time or talents to be auctioned off. Anything from food preparation to tours of local sights, from yard and garden work to a sports outing or anything you can dream up would be a perfect auction item

The synagogue will provide latkes and all the fixins, please bring a salad or side dish, a *chanukiyah* and four candles.





**Rabbi
David
Feder**

The Fall Holiday marathon is over and we have survived. Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot and Simchat Torah have all concluded. We have heard the blast of the shofar, fasted, rejoiced and eaten pizza in our sukkah and danced with the Torah. At least many of us have. It was hard not to notice the decline in participation in these observances. Our models of Judaism, Jewish Community and participation have all changed and as a people and a community we struggle to adjust to new needs and definitions.

If I think back to the years of my childhood, my parents were not particularly observant. Pressure from children was needed to get them to light Shabbat candles. A *yahrzeit* or special Religious School event was needed to get them to go to services. But on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, they went to Temple. I don't think it was out of any sense of piety, but out of a combination of different factors, primarily out of expectation and habit. They went because their parents and their families expected them to be there. They went because their friends expected them to be there. They went because of the expectations of non-Jewish neighbors; it was almost a civic responsibility for them to be there. And they went because they felt that God expected them to show up at least on the significant occasions. And they went because that was their habit. That was what their parents and grandparents had done and what they assumed their children would also do.

Today, we by and large don't have those sets of expectations. Our neighbors don't expect us to be at synagogue in much the same way we don't expect them to be at church or mosque. Our families no longer really

expect as much of us; expectation being replaced with hope. And for most, Jewish observance is no longer one of our habits.

We always seem to be busy. And we still have expectations of us; participation on a committee, time for civic causes, obligations to soccer, or scouts or piano. Rather than a haven, the synagogue often seems to be a chore, another activity to be tended to, another obligation to be ticked off before we can get home and relax and find a few moments of quiet and relaxation with a conversation, a book or the mind numbing qualities of television.

Expectation and obligation are no longer compelling reasons for us. We shop for something that has meaning to us personally. Just as we shop for phones or clothes or diets or music that are custom-tailored for our needs or that we mix and match and select ourselves, so to do we search for meaning. Some find it in solitary meditation, others in social service organizations, still others through serving the needs of children or parents.

I find and believe that others can find that sense of meaning within Judaism and Jewish community. Within the wealth of our heritage we find teachings for individual meditation within our mystical traditions, methods for personal growth and character development within the mussar tradition, a responsibility for service and world repair under the concept of *tikkun olam*, guidance for living our lives and making decisions through Torah in its broadest sense. The goal of our community is to provide those opportunities to individuals and to groups to see and learn and grow from the knowledge and experience of our tradition.

Chanukah will soon be upon us. Chanukah means "dedication". It reminds us that we have the opportunity to rededicate ourselves to our community and all that it has to offer, as well as to all that we have to offer to our community. Let us know your interests, your needs and your desires.

You won't be alone. Let us search together for meaning, creating and designing programs that will bring each of us a greater sense of meaning and fulfillment.

COOKING NIGHT – JEWISH FOOD OF THE BALKANS

On Sunday evening, November 8, at 7:00 pm we will explore the food and culture of the Jews of the Balkans. The Jewish communities of the Balkans (the former Yugoslavia, Albania, Bulgaria and Greece) were some of the oldest in Europe and date back to ancient times as well as having received a large influx of Sephardic Jews and later Ashkenazi Jews. In Slovenia, there were Jewish immigrants dating back to Roman times pre-dating the 6th Century settlement of the region by the Slavic peoples. However the Jewish communities in the Balkans suffered immensely during [World War II](#) and the vast majority were killed during the Shoah. Most of the remainder emigrated to Israel and elsewhere. We will explore some of the rich culinary traditions of this region that mix the original cuisine of the Romaniot communities with the Spanish traditions brought by exiles in the 16th century overlaid with the influences of the Turks. Because we will be cooking, reservations will be needed to insure that adequate supplies are on hand. Please contact Rabbi Feder if you wish to participate

BOOK NIGHT PEOPLE OF THE BOOK

Join us as we discuss "People of the Book," By Geraldine Brooks, on Sunday night, November 15. This novel presents a fictional history of the real Sarajevo Haggadah, the oldest illuminated Sephardic Haggadah, created in Barcelona in the 1350's and then enduring centuries of travel from Spain to Portugal to Venice to Vienna and finally Sarjevo. Brook's' account will give us the opportunity to discuss the survival of Judaism and our own Jewish journeys and artifacts (physically and spiritually).

JEWISH BOOK MONTH

Each year we mark the centrality of books for the People of the Book with Jewish Book Month, lasting from the 25th of Cheshvan to the 25th of Kislev, this year corresponding to November 12-December 12. To kick off Jewish Book Month this year, we will be having special programming within the Religious School. At 11:00 am on Sunday, November 15, our Religious School students will have the chance to travel back into time.

Our girls will have the chance to journey back to New York in 1914 as they enter the world of Rebecca Rubin, the first Jewish American Girl doll in Meet Rebecca. Our students will learn what life was like for a Jewish immigrant 95 years ago.

Our boys will journey back to Cleveland in the 1930's entering the world of Jerry Siegel and Joe Schuster as they create Superman in Boys of Steel: The Creators of Superman. They will learn about the Jewish influences on the creation of Superman. For both boys and girls lunch will be served, appropriate to the books they are entering.

During the program, information about Jewish book month, bookmarks, and information about our own reading goals and prizes will be distributed.

That evening, at 7:00 pm, there will be a discussion of *People of the Book*. By Geraldine Brooks. This novel presents a fictional history of the real Sarajevo Haggadah, the oldest illuminated Sephardic Haggadah, created in Barcelona in the 1350's and then enduring centuries of travel from Spain to Portugal to Venice to Vienna and finally Sarjevo. Brook's' account will give us the opportunity to discuss the survival of Judaism and our own Jewish journeys and artifacts (physically and spiritually).

CHANUKAH

Chanukah begins on the 25th day of the Hebrew month of Kislev and continues for 8 days. This year, the first night will be Friday, December 11. Chanukah literally means "dedication", referring to the rededication of the Second Temple in Jerusalem by the Maccabees or Hasmoneans in 166 B.C. E. The Temple had been desecrated by the Syrians, led by their ruler, Antiochus IV and turned into a pagan shrine. The Hasmoneans or Maccabees, a priestly family living in the village of Modi'in, led a popular guerilla war of conservative Judeans against the Syrians and their Hellenistic Jewish sympathizers. Overcoming forces that were far more numerous and much better trained, the Maccabees set about restoring the Temple to its original purity. Basing their rededication on the description of Solomon's original dedication of the Temple, the celebration lasted for 8 days.

The Maccabees proved to be poorly suited for ruling the nation and generations of internal strife and intrigue characterized their reign. The Rabbis replaced the Maccabees as the hero of the Chanukah story with God, emphasizing the miracle of the small overcoming the mighty as well as the story of the container of oil that lasted for eight days. In fact, Chanukah is the only ancient holiday we celebrate that is post-biblical. The story of Chanukah can be found in the books I and II Maccabees, which are part of the extra-canonical collection known as the Apocrypha.

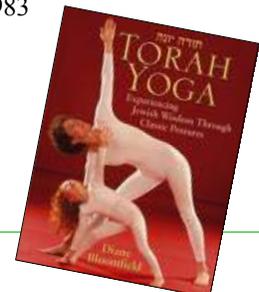
Chanukah is traditionally observed by kindling lights in the *chanukiyah* each evening, as well as eating food cooked in oil such as *latkes* (potato pancakes) and *sufganiyot* (doughnuts). It is also a time for playing with the *dreidel* or *s'vivon*. The custom of gift giving at Chanukah time is a relatively recent addition based on the older custom of *Chanukah gelt*, giving children small amounts of money for Chanukah.

OFFERINGS

Raising children is one of the most challenging and rewarding occupations. And we all know that children are not born with a manual of directions for parents. Fortunately there are wonderful resources to help guide us. I am offering to facilitate a discussion group, "Raising Your Child to Be a Mensch." We will examine some of the inspiring resources including a wisdom packed book called The Blessing of A Skinned Knee by psychologist Wendy Mogel. "Judaism, with its two thousand year old perspective on family dynamics, can help you take your rightful place at the head of the family table" she writes. Through the lens of Jewish teachings, she shows parents how to teach children to be respectful, self disciplined, appreciative and resourceful. We will also share insights from lessons we have learned on our own parenting journeys. If you are interested in joining this group please come to the first meeting at my home (a few minutes walk from the synagogue - 245 Allison St. - a brown wood and stone house on the corner of Allison and Wagner) We will meet one another, begin looking at some sources of information and set a schedule for future meetings. SUNDAY, OCT. 25, 10:45 am. RSVP by 10/19 rebroz@comcast.net or 304 292-2983

WEST MEETS EAST

Explore spiritual practices which combine Judaism and Eastern approaches. We will begin with a book by Rabbi Rami Shapiro called The Sacred Art of Lovingkindness, Preparing to Practice and Torah Yoga by Diane Bloomfield. We will also incorporate music and meditation. Please contact me if you are interested. rebroz@comcast.net or 304 292-2983



TREE OF LIFE GIFT SHOP

HANUKKAH SALE 2009 ONLY THREE DAYS TO SHOP



WEDNESDAY, December 2 4:00 – 5:30 PM
SUNDAY, December 6 9:39 – 12:00 Noon
WEDNESDAY, December 9 4:00 – 5:30 PM

Many Driedels, candles, menorahs, wrapping paper

Spend \$10.00 and all gift wrap is \$1.00!!!

WE HAVE ALL YOUR GIFT GIFTING NEEDS
WITHOUT SALES TAX!!!!!!

ALL PROCEEDS GO TO SUNDAY SCHOOL!!!

QUESTIONS/ DELIVERY OPTIONS?
Contact Joan Addicks 599-4521

TODAH RABAH

Tree of Life is pleased to acknowledge gifts received during September & October 2009. Donations are listed in chronological order.

TORAH FUND

William & Shirley Bellman

RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

Michael & Julie Risch

GENERAL DONATION

Stephanie Savitch
Michael & Julie Risch
Seth & Ran Tanner
Roger & Linda Abrahams

RABBI'S

DISCRETIONARY FUND

Judith Stitzel
Bert Cohen
Paul & Ruth Siegel

HOLY DAYS DONATION

Cheri & Gary Chenoweth
John & Carole Wilson
Kenneth Mitchell
Ariel Agmon
Stanley Einzig
& Nancy Abrams

YIZKOR

Stephanie Savitch
Judith Stitzel

Bennett &
Muriel Millstone
William & Shirley Bellman
Gloria Lees
Shirley Hirsch
Lawrence &
Barbara Jacowitz
Shirley Rosenbaum
Sandra Gutmann
Norman & Martha Lass
Jan Ditzian &
Christine Bezouska
Alan & Merle Stolzenberg
Bernard & Sylvia Cooper
Terry Schwartz &
Jonathan Perlman
Reed & Cindy Tanner
Kathleen Territo
James & Helene Friedberg
Howard Mall
Neal & Susan Newfield

We rely on donations to help meet our budget. Please think about making donations in honor or memory of people. Rabbi Feder and Merle can give you complete information.



I Gave At the Synagogue

FROM THE TREASURER

Thank you to those who have pledged this year. It is not too late to pledge if you have not already done so. Tree of Life counts on the support of *all of our members*.



Please consider contributing to one of our special funds (Contact Merle or Rabbi Feder for a complete list) to honor or commemorate a special occasion. We will be recognizing donors in the synagogue's Newsletter.

JEWISH- MUSLIM DIALOGUE AND COOPERATION

We have been approached by the local Muslim community through the auspices of the Foundation for Ethnic Understanding to engage in dialogue and in serving the greater Morgantown community. The initial meetings will set the goals and the parameters of our joint effort. If you are interested in participating, please contact Rabbi Feder.

KINDERGARTEN CONSECRATION—SIMCHAT TORAH



OCTOBER 9, 2009



Photos: Karen Feder

RELIGIOUS SCHOOL NEWS

We spent the opening weeks of Religious School immersing ourselves in the Fall Holidays and giving students and our teachers a chance to get to know each other.

Jennifer Lipsitz is teaching our preschool class again this year. Our preschoolers will continue to be introduced to the life of the synagogue, our holiday cycle and those significant concepts at the heart of Judaism through stories, songs and crafts.

Bonnie Snider has returned again to teach our Kindergarten class. The kindergarteners are immersing themselves in the stories found in our Torah as well as preparing for the holidays as they arrive.

Blair Lord, a WVU student from Charleston is responsible for our 1st Grade class. She will be leading them through the examination of the weekly Torah portion, the holidays, significant Jewish concepts and Hebrew.

Naomi Gingold is currently in town and is teaching our 2nd/3rd graders

about Israel, the life cycle, holidays, mitzvot, and God.

Sheryl Grossman, a relatively recent resident of Morgantown is utilizing her knowledge and experience in teaching our 4th Grade class as they explore Torah, Holidays, God and values.

Rabbi Feder is once again teaching the 6th/7th grade class as they look to Torah, Jewish values and Jewish role models.

The Religious School looks forward to celebrating Jewish Book Month in November and once again prepare special programs for Chanukah in December.

ADULT EDUCATION JUDAISM: THE BASICS

If your memory is a little fuzzy and you want to review what you learned as a child, if you're finding it difficult to answer your own children's questions, or if you've never had the chance to study and explore Judaism, this class is for you. We will continue to explore the basics of Jewish beliefs and practices. In November, we begin our unit

on the Jewish life cycle.

MOVIE NIGHT THE JEWISH CLASSICS

On Sunday night, November 1, we will be screening the recently restored Yiddish classic, "The Jester." Shot in Poland in 1937, it features both stars of the American Yiddish theater, as well as the stars of the Warsaw Yiddish Arts Theater.

This musical drama stars a lonely wanderer, a circus performer and Esther, the shoemaker's daughter, whose family tries to marry her into a prominent family. One of the film's centerpieces is a Purim shpiel (Purim play) with its parade of costumes and music.

"The Jester's" lively circus and vaudeville music and set pieces provide a glimpse of Warsaw's then-thriving Yiddish revues and cabarets, which were destroyed soon after. Many of the film's Polish-Jewish crew and actors were killed during the Holocaust, giving the film's touches of melancholy an even more profound reading for today's audiences.

*Yuki Cather
invites you to share
the Bar Mitzvah
of her son*

Andrew

*Saturday,
November 14
10 am*

*Lunch will
follow the service*

Dry Bones HAPPY HOLIDAY



DryBonesBlog.com

MITZVAH DAY

Sandy Gutmann

Anyone who would be willing to help at the Ronald MacDonald House on Christmas Day for a three hour shift needs to get in touch with me at either: 304-599-3543, or Ssgutmann@aol.com in plenty of time for me to fit them into the day's schedule. The times for the Ronald MacDonald House are from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. in three hour sessions. I need two volunteers for each session. PLEASE LET ME KNOW AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. I have to give the people at the Ronald MacDonald House a number, etc. so we can set up the orientation meeting before the 25th

CLERGY HOSPITAL VISITATION

The law (HIPPA) prohibits The Temple and our clergy from obtaining clergy sheets and religious census information from hospitals.

We need your help!

Please notify **Kathy Abate**, xuaf@aol.com co-chair of the CARE Committee of any serious sickness in your family or hospital admissions.

MI SHEBEIRACH / WELLNESS PRAYERS

Please remember to consult with those who are in need of healing, before publicly adding their names to the Mi Shebeirach list. With their permission, we would like to add whatever support we can to their recovery and healing.

**Share Your Simcha
Buy a Leaf on
THE SIMCHA TREE**

**\$250/leaf
\$2500/Small Stone
\$5000/Large Stone
Contact
Merle Stolzenberg/
Barbara Jacowitz**



Remember a loved one
with a
Yahrzeit Plaque

\$300 DONATION

Contact: Bennett Millstone

*We note with sadness
the passing of
Richard Cohen's
Mother, Ida Cohen*

*May her memory be
as a blessing.*

For My Grandmother

By Deborah Rossel
on October 5, 2009

Leah bat Esther (1925-1990)



Barchu:

your departure
a call to worship
a plane ride home

Shema:

my faith pressed
against question, face
against glass, where
even underneath us
it is night

T'filah:

I will remember
those who came
before me, my sister

sobbing because
your coffin looks
too small

Aleinu:

we are chosen
to live among death
to remember, always
my father crying
his full weight
in his arm
over my shoulder

Kaddish:

we are taught
to move on
and to remain
constantly aware
of conclusion
I put a stone
on your grave
like my father did
on Sundays
before he moved
flowers die, he said
or blow away.

*From Scribblers on the Roof
A Forum for Jewish Fiction
and Poetry:
<http://www.jscribes.com/>*

Hadassah

Monique Gingold

Shalom y'all. We hope your holidays were filled with good food, family, friends, and inspirational thoughts.

We still hope to encourage not only Hadassah members, but the entire congregation to attend the Pittsburgh ballet, "The Holocaust and Humanity Project," Sunday, November 15, 2009. Please contact Monique if you are interested.

We are looking forward to our annual Sisterhood and Hadassah Chanukah party/Rosh Chodesh meeting December 17, 2010. We also plan on having a Rosh Chodesh meeting February 13, 2010. Locations will be announced.

Lastly, June 6, 2010, we will end the year with our traditional annual book meeting where we share ideas for great books to read.

We look forward to seeing familiar faces and meeting new ones!!!

For information on dates, places, cards and certificates, Zionist and Hadassah news, you are invited to visit our web page at mysite.verizon.net/vzev6e7j

Sisterhood

Barbara Jacowitz

The Tree of Life Sisterhood is making some exciting plans for the 2009-2010 season. We will be donating a defibrillator to the Tree of Life Congregation at a defibrillator Sabbath or Havdolah. All are invited to the pres-

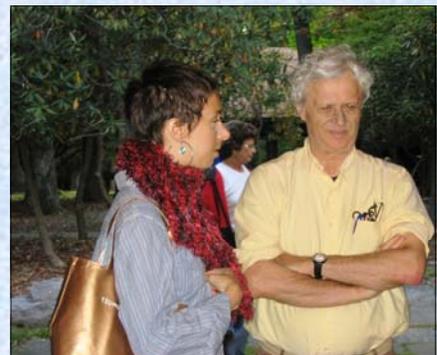


entation party. Everyone will be invited to learn how to defibrillator with us.

We are planning an open Sisterhood meeting to welcome the new members and the Clarksburg and Fairmont members to Tree of Life in Morgantown. We will soon have a telephone tree in place. Personal calls will be made to transmit good news

and bad news in a timely manner. Plans are being made to place new curtains on the Holy Ark. There are a great number of exciting things we are planning for this year. We need your help to make Sisterhood a success. Please give us some time when you are asked to volunteer. The dues form is on page 11 of this Newsletter. Your dues enable us to make contributions to the Congregation.

Coopers Rock Shabbat Autumn 2009



Calendars

DECEMBER 2009				
Date	Day	Event	Time	
Dec 02	Wednesday	Hebrew School	04:30 PM	
		Zumba	06:00 PM	
		Judaism: The Basics	07:00 PM	
Dec 04	Friday	Tot Shabbat	05:45 PM	
		Pot-luck Shabbat Dinner	06:30 PM	
		Shabbat Evening Service	07:30 PM	
Dec 05	Saturday	Torah Study	10:00 AM	
Dec 06	Sunday	Religious School	09:30 AM	
		Preschool	10:30 AM	
		Post B'nai Mitzvah Class	05:00 PM	
		Movie Night	07:00 PM	
Dec 09	Wednesday	Hebrew School	04:30 PM	
		Zumba	06:00 PM	
		Judaism: The Basics	07:00 PM	
Dec 11	Friday	Shabbat Evening Service	07:30 PM	
		First Night of Chanukah		
Dec 12	Saturday	Shabbat Morning Service	10:00:00 AM	
Dec 13	Sunday	No Religious School		
		Chanukah Party	05:00 PM	
Dec 16	Wednesday	Hebrew School	04:30 PM	
		Zumba	06:00 PM	
		Judaism: The Basics	07:00 PM	
Dec 17	Thursday	Sisterhood-Hadassah Chanukah Party	TBA	
Dec 18	Friday	Shabbat Evening Service	07:30 PM	
		Last night of Chanukah		
Dec 19	Saturday	Torah Study	10:00 AM	
Dec 20	Sunday	Religious School	09:30 AM	
		Preschool	10:30 AM	
		Post B'nai Mitzvah Class	05:00 PM	
		Book Night	07:00 PM	
Dec 23	Wednesday	NO HEBREW SCHOOL		
Dec 25	Friday	Shabbat Evening Service	07:30 PM	
Dec 26	Saturday	Shabbat Morning Service	10:00 AM	
Dec 27	Sunday	NO RELIGIOUS SCHOOL		
Dec 30	Wednesday	NO HEBREW SCHOOL		
Jan 01	Friday	Shabbat Evening Service	07:30 PM	
Jan 02	Saturday	Torah Study	10:00 AM	
Jan 03	Sunday	NO RELIGIOUS SCHOOL		

NOVEMBER 2009				
Date	Day	Event	Time	
Nov 01	Sunday	Religious School	09:30 AM	
		Preschool	10:30 AM	
		Post B'nai Mitzvah Class	05:00 PM	
		Movie Night	07:00 PM	
Nov 04	Wednesday	Hebrew School	04:30 PM	
		Zumba	06:00 PM	
		Judaism: The Basics	07:00 PM	
Nov 06	Friday	Tot Shabbat	05:45 PM	
		Pot-luck Shabbat Dinner	06:30 PM	
		Shabbat Evening Service	07:30 PM	
Nov 07	Saturday	Torah Study	10:00 AM	
Nov 08	Sunday	Religious School	09:30 AM	
		Preschool	10:30 AM	
		Post B'nai Mitzvah Class	05:00 PM	
		Cooking Night	07:00 PM	
Nov 09	Monday	Kristallnacht		
Nov 11	Wednesday	Hebrew School	04:30 PM	
		Zumba	06:00 PM	
		Judaism: The Basics	07:00 PM	
Nov 13	Friday	Shabbat Evening Service	07:30 PM	
Nov 14	Saturday	Shabbat Morning Service	10:00 AM	
		Bar Mitzvah of Andrew Cather		
Nov 15	Sunday	Religious School	09:30 AM	
		Preschool	10:30 AM	
		Post B'nai Mitzvah Class	05:00 PM	
		Book Night	07:00 PM	
Nov 18	Wednesday	Hebrew School	04:30 PM	
		Zumba	06:00 PM	
		Judaism: The Basics	07:00 PM	
Nov 20	Friday	Shabbat Evening Service	07:30 PM	
Nov 21	Saturday	Torah Study	10:00 AM	
Nov 22	Sunday	NO RELIGIOUS SCHOOL		
Nov 25	Wednesday	NO HEBREW SCHOOL		
Nov 26	Thursday	THANKSGIVING		
Nov 27	Friday	Shabbat Evening Service	07:30 PM	
Nov 28	Saturday	Shabbat Morning Service	10:00 AM	
Nov 29	Sunday	NO RELIGIOUS SCHOOL		
Dec 02	Wednesday	Hebrew School	04:30 PM	
		Zumba	06:00 PM	
		Judaism: The Basics	07:00 PM	

SISTERHOOD 2009 – 2010 DUES

Please mail this form, with your check for Sisterhood 2009-2010 dues, to the Sisterhood Treasurer, Eva Segert-Tauger, at the following address. Please disregard this notice if you have already paid your dues in advance:

Treasurer
TOL Sisterhood
P.O. Box 4051
Morgantown, WV 26504-4051

Name: _____

Preferred e-mail address: _____

DUES LEVELS:

Standard membership level	\$25.00	_____
Sarah membership level	\$36.00	_____
Rivka membership level	\$72.00	_____
Leah membership level	\$90.00	_____
Rachel membership level	\$108.00	_____
Miriam membership level	Above \$108.00	_____
Life members	\$18.00	_____

(New life memberships are not available at this time at this level)

Sisterhood is a non-profit organization, and the entire amount of your dues may be tax-deductible, depending on your individual situation. (For more details, please consult your tax advisor.) Your cancelled check is your receipt.

The TOL Sisterhood pays \$15.00 each year per member to Women of Reform Judaism (WRJ), and \$2.00 each year to the WRJ regional organization. The remainder of the dues directly benefits the Tree of Life Congregation.

If you have any questions about your dues, please call Eva at (304) 599-4268.

Eva Segert-Tauger, Treasurer

Tree of Life Congregation
PO Box 791
Morgantown, WV 26507-0791
(304) 292-7029

FIRST CLASS MAIL



KRISTALLNACHT

This year marks the 61st anniversary of Kristallnacht, when on November 9th and 10th, hundreds of synagogues and Jewish owned businesses throughout Germany were "spontaneously" vandalized by German mobs, many of them burned to the ground. This marked the escalation of violence against Jews that would lead to the final solution.

We will commemorate Kristallnacht this year during our Shabbat service on Friday, November 13.